

Once upon a time, a wedding registry was just for letting guests know your china, crystal, and silver patterns (and, of course, you needed eight of everything). It's a different story today.

Brides and grooms are increasingly creating lists that reflect their lifestyles - with the result that camping equipment, power tools, and gas grills are appearing on registries almost as frequently as towels and glassware. While there's no end to what you can register for, it's a good idea to have a plan in mind before you and your betrothed grab the scanning gun. The registry tips on the following pages should help get you focused.

### **Evaluate your needs.**



It may sound obvious, but base your list on your actual lifestyle. If your style is casual, you might want to skip the fine china or crystal. Many wedding registry sites have checklists of everything a couple might need. Printing one out and deciding what you need - and just as important, what you don't - before you register is a great way to refine your wish list.

### **Think about your guests.**

Since a registry is really for your guests' convenience, consider it from their point of view as well as yours. Registering at several places gives your guests options (but don't register for the same item in more than one place!). Local brick-and-mortar stores are handy for guests who live nearby, but if your guest list spans the continent, consider online registries or national chain stores that offer both online and local shop-in-person options.

### **Consider registry perks and services.**

Not all registries offer the same services. Take a little time to investigate. Does the registry offer incentives, or discounts? Does the consultant send time with you, answer your questions, and follow up? Having a good relationship with the registry coordinator can be a big plus.

### **Offer less-expensive options, too.**

## Vermont Vows: The Registry

Written by Anna Post

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While you doubtless have your heart set on certain big-ticket items, take your guests' varying budgets into consideration and make sure your list contains a choice of items in different price ranges.

**Inform politely.**

It's best to let people know where you've registered "the old fashioned way" - by word of mouth. Tell your family and attendants where you're registered. Guests will ask them, and they'll help get the word out. It's fine to have links to your registry on your wedding website, but don't make them the most prominent feature of your page. Remember, a registry is a "wish list". Reassure guests that they aren't required to choose from your registry, and that any gift from them will be special.

### **Step away from the invitation!**

It's never ok to include registry information on or with any invitation to the wedding or reception, or with any wedding announcement. Why? Because the emphasis shifts from "we want you to be with us on our special day" to "you need to buy us a gift, and here's what we want." For a wedding shower, it is okay for the host to include a separate sheet of paper along with the invitation, letting people know where the couple is registered. It may seem like splitting hairs, but the end result is that the focus stays on the couple and the event rather than the gift.

**Monitor and refresh.**

Check on your registry once in a while, even after the wedding, and add items if you need to as a help to those who may be a little late with a gift.

### **Explore alternative registries. □**

You're not limited to just registering for "stuff." You can also register for a honeymoon or other trip (be careful - some services charge a fee or a percentage of the gift to cover "handling"), or even dance lessons. Charities are another option, as are contributions on a down payment on a house.

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